



Lakewood Discovery Center

Salina Parks and Recreation Department

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Winter 2007

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Lakewood Discovery Center is the Natural Resources division of the Salina Parks & Recreation Department. LDC provides Salina with its own Urban Wildlife Sanctuary and Nature Center. Our mission and goal is to provide opportunities for members of the community and the surrounding area to explore and learn about the environment through discovery and hands on activities.

We strive to make the center a teaching tool by providing many outdoor aspects in an indoor setting. Visitors have the chance not only to interact with our many educational displays, but also get up close to some of the wildlife that lives in the park. Through these encounters, the visitors' awareness and knowledge of native wildlife will increase.

As our community grows, we also want to grow with it. We want to continue to provide a great place to observe and learn about nature. For no matter if you are younger or older, it is essential to remember that the environment is not ours, it is merely ours to take care of and pass along to the future caretakers of the land.

The Supervisor's Desk:



Christmas has come and gone. The holidays take so long to get here but go by so fast. Now we find ourselves once again in the clutches of Old Man Winter's grasp, looking out at the long stretch of winter we have to endure until life is renewed in the spring. The post-Christmas winter months are a time for making some of our most time-honored winter rituals part of our daily lives, an important part. I am talking about the little things that we don't do at any other time of the year, like enjoying the warmth of a crackling fire in the fireplace, knowing that the fire is not any hotter than before, but as the cold wind blows by the window, it seems like the warmest fire of the winter. The satisfaction of a good cup of hot chocolate with *three* mini-marshmallows instead of two because we all know that we deserve the luxuries that count, and besides it was your turn to trudge out to the mail box on Saturday morning when it was 3 degrees out. And if your house is like mine, it is uphill both ways.

Some new features to look for this coming year include a new mammal research display where you can investigate clues left behind by many new display mammals; remodeling the Backyard Winter Bird display to include spring and summer features; a learning station in the Young Naturalist Room that will identify poisonous and venomous plants and animals of Kansas; and our new "Lakewood Nature Find" mural featuring plants and animals that live in our Wildlife Sanctuary. Also, Salina Parks & Recreation is launching a new interactive web site that has many fun features that you can explore, and Lakewood Discovery Center will be featured on the site. All of our programming and special events information will be posted, along with new trip information, archived events, pictures of past events and participants enjoying them, plus much, much more! We hope you'll look us up!

Brian Underwood, Natural Resources Supervisor



Lakewood Wildlife Feature:

KANSAS SYMBOLS



January 29th is Kansas Day!! The day that Kansans wildly celebrate the history and natural resources of their great state. Ok, so maybe it isn't as enthusiastic as I made that sound, but it is still an important occasion. Education plays an important part in this day. Schools and communities across the state hold different activities that help people of all ages have a better understanding of our beginning, present, and future.

Kansas has many official symbols. Some are obscure while others are fairly common knowledge. For example almost everyone knows that the state song is "Home on the Range" and can belt out a line or two however horrific that may be. Did you know that there is a state soil? I can hear some of you now. There's a state soil of Kansas? Isn't it just dirt anyway? No it isn't dirt. It is the majestic Harney silt loam. All of the symbols have an interesting story to tell whether it is why, how, or when they were selected to represent the great state of Kansas.

Everyone knows what the state mammal is right? Many people will shout out it's the Buffalo! This is a common misconception. The American Bison is the correct answer. The only true buffalo is found in Asia. I know this is technical mumbo jumbo but you may need a trivia question to stump that annoying trivia buff someday. The bison was selected as the state rep in 1955. There were two main reasons given for the selection of this gigantic herbivore as our beloved mammal: 1) "Home on the Range's" 1st line is "give me a home where the buffalo roam and 2) buffalo roamed the prairies in millions during the early days of statehood. These are both great reasons for the selection but there are other characteristics of this two ton running Wal-Mart of the plains that make it a great representative. The Bison was the main food supply of the Native Americans. Not only did it supply needed nourishment it also provided most of the other products needed for survival. Nearly all of the parts of this critter were used as tools, shelter, toys, fuel, decorations, and even the highly effective tail fly swatter. The near decimation in the middle to late 1800's and resurrection provides a valuable example for all to learn from. A couple of areas around Salina offer the opportunity to view the bison in natural surroundings, Maxwell Game Refuge by McPherson, Smoky Hill Bison Company by Assaria, and Konza Prairie by Manhattan.

A reptile is a cold-blooded, egg-laying vertebrate that is covered in scales or horny plates according to the American Heritage Dictionary. Unless you are a naturalist, herpetologist, or other creepy crawler lover this definition may not bring cute and cuddly images to mind. An Ornate Box Turtle may change a person's perspective. Each shell looks as if someone has taken a paintbrush and designed a pattern of yellow lines. Like snowflakes there are no two turtles that look exactly alike because each pattern differs. In 1986 Larry Miller and his sixth grade class from Caldwell in Sumner County were able to persuade the Kansas Legislation and Governor to adopt this terrestrial animal as the official state reptile. There are many interesting characteristics that make this animal unique. An Ornate Box Turtle's gender can be determined by looking at the eyes. Males have red/orange eyes while females have yellow eyes. The lower shell of the turtle is also hinged which allows it to pull itself completely within the shell making it one of the only turtles that is able to do this. The Ornate Box Turtle is quite numerous and can be found throughout the state.

Today Cottonwood trees often go unnoticed. Many times these trees only receive recognition when their seeds are seen flying in the air. There are many Cottonwoods around Lakewood and in May it can look like a snow shower has broken out in late spring. To the earlier settlers and travelers of Kansas this tree was always noticed and was very important. The sight of a stand of trees meant escape from the harsh environment of the open prairie. These areas also led travelers to water to quench thirst and wood for heat or shelter. The fast growing characteristics of these native trees made it a popular choice for the 1st pioneers of the plains. With all these qualities the Kansas Legislature officially nominated the Cottonwood as the state tree in 1937.

One of the most identifiable symbols for the state of Kansas is the sunflower. It was given this recognition in 1903 making it the second oldest state symbol after the State Seal. The sunflower faced an obstacle before receiving its honor. It was declared a noxious weed in 1895 and ordered eradicated. The saving grace of the sunflower came in 1901. While attending a rodeo in Colorado, George Moorehouse, a Kansas State senator, noticed that all of the Kansans were wearing sunflowers. So struck was Moorehouse by the simple beauty of the flower and the bond created between Kansans that he penned a bill making the sunflower an official state symbol. Who would have imagined that a gathering of cowboys in Colorado helped coin Kansas the Sunflower State?

Whether you refer to Kansas as the Wheat State, the Jayhawk State, Midway U.S.A., or one of its many other nicknames, Kansas is unique. The plants and animals that grow and live here make our state unlike any other. On January 29th, appreciate the fact that you live in a state where cheerful sunflowers grow wild in the ditches, Cottonwood branches nearly touch the clouds, Box Turtles cross country roads and sometimes stop traffic and 146 years after being admitted into the union as the 34th state the buffalo (actually bison) still roam.





Lakewood Seasonal Activities

Spring: (Listed in the P & R Spring Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Spring Break Adventure Days: Bored during Spring Break? Looking for something to do. LDC offers programs on the Tuesday and Thursday of Salina Public Schools' Spring Break.

S.C.A.T.: All ages welcome. This 1½ hr program features Snacks, Crafts, Animals, and Trails. Participants will learn about native critters, take a guided nature walk, and make a snack as well as craft to take home.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Spring for a different Thursday program.

Mother's Day Trip: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take mom on a trip she will remember. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for fun.

Summer: (Listed in the P & R Summer Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Father's Day Trips: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take dad on a trip he will enjoy. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for a day of fun.

Backyard Detectives: Ages 4-5 and 6-8. These 1½ hr hour classes focus on one topic per, week, i.e. Creepy Crawlies. Each class makes a craft and snack and takes a nature walk in addition to other learning activities.

Jr. Explorers: Ages 9-12. This is an experiential learning series done in partnership with the Smoky Hill Museum. We do hands-on activities, interact with guest speakers, and travel to see what goes on behind the scenes. Each week has two days devoted to one topic.

G.R.E.A.T. Cops & Fossils: Grades 4th – 7th. These day long classes are a part of the Saline Co. Sheriff Department's G.R.E.A.T. program. Each class learns about the fossils that can be found in Kansas, and then travels to local fossil sites to search for fossils of their own. The participants will mount the fossils they find to take home.

Archery: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach the sport's technique, safety, rules, and etiquette at a beginner and intermediate level.

Canoeing: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach water safety and basic canoeing skills.

Fishing Explorers: Ages 7 and older. These day long programs offer several skill levels, beginning with Basics in Bluegills and moving on to Bass Fishing and Catfish. In each class, equipment, technique, and safety are taught.

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Fall: (Listed in the P & R Fall Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Fall Family Nature Series:

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Campfire Stories: All ages welcome, although some of the stories are scary. ☺ Spend an October evening by the campfire, enjoying smores and hearing stories told by the LDC staff.

Pumpkin Fest: All ages. Celebrate the Halloween season with an evening of pumpkin carving. Pumpkins, carving tools, and treats are supplied.

Campfire Cooking: All ages. Learn the art of campfire cuisine. Techniques and "secrets" shared on how to make a fireside feast. Then try the different foods cooked that evening by the LDC staff. Past foods have included campfire lasagna, pot pie, and cinnamon donuts.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Fall for other quarterly programming.

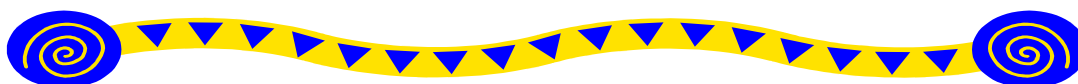
Winter: (Listed in the P & R Winter Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Eagle Day: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. This day long program takes participants to Milford Lake where bald eagles nest. The trip includes touring the Milford Nature Center, an eagle program by the MNC staff, and time for eagle watching.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Winter for other quarterly programming.

Year-Round :

In addition to the above set of programs, Lakewood offers Walk & Tours of the center, nature walks, girl & boy scout badge programs, and in-class programs. These programs are by appointment. Special topics can be requested for individual groups. Two weeks notice is required to book a program.





Lakewood Quarterly Programs



We at Lakewood Discovery Center strive to create programs and trips that explore the natural world while making the experience fun and educational. The physical activity encountered during these programs and trips range from minimal to strenuous activity. To better gauge whether a program is suited for your needs, we have assigned a star system to each event, ranging from 1-5 stars. 1 star = light walking and minimal activity, 2 stars = light walking and more than one activity, 3 stars = moderate walking/physical effort and extended hours of activity, 4 stars = moderate to considerable walking/physical activity, 5 stars = substantial walking/strenuous physical effort with activity. If you have any questions, please contact us at 785-826-7335.

- Unless otherwise noted, register for classes by calling the Parks and Recreation main office at 309-5765. •

Kansas Eagle Education

Join us as we travel to visit Lawrence's Eagle Day festivities which include live eagle demonstrations, hands-on activities, crafts, and other activities. This event is full of fun *and* educational opportunities that any eagle enthusiast will enjoy. (2 stars)



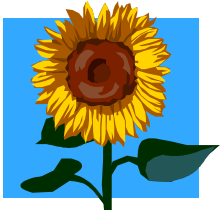
When: Sunday, January 21

Time: 8:30 am – afternoon (meet at Lakewood Discovery Center)

Limit: 12 participants (all ages welcome – 15 & under must be accompanied by an adult)

Fee: \$10.00

Kansas Day Open House



Help us celebrate Kansas Day! Lakewood Discovery Center is hosting a Kansas Day Open House full of fun and educational activities. We will have live animal presentations, a Kansas symbols guessing game, puppet show, and true Kansas stories that will entertain all ages. We will also have hands-on activities and refreshments. This is a free event for all to enjoy. (1 stars)

When: Sunday, January 28

Time: 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Limit: none

Fee: donation only



Fly Fishing Class

This will be an in-depth demonstration on how to tie your own flies, what materials to use, and the art of casting a fly rod. This program is designed for beginners and experienced anglers alike. Our instructor will work with you and demonstrate everything you will need to know to become a better fly fisherman/woman. You will be able to tie various flies at your own speed and skill level. We will also have time to cast our new creations down at the lake that will be stocked with rainbow trout (license and trout stamp required.) (3 stars)

When: Sunday, February 25

Time: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm (will break for lunch)

Limit: 10 participants (ages 12 & up)

Fee: \$30.00 per person



Colorado White Water Adventure

Are you looking for excitement, an opportunity to meet new people that enjoy the outdoors? Look no further than this adventure trip. We will be traveling to the rugged Colorado Rockies for an extended weekend vacation that will allow you to camp among some of the most beautiful vistas in the world. The first part of our trip will have us camping on the back side of Pike's Peak and visiting the historic town of Cripple Creek for a night of entertainment. The next day we will arrive in Buena Vista to start our white water rafting trip down the Arkansas River. This river run will take us through the Brown & Wildhorse Canyons where we will encounter class 3+ rapids. This run is considered the best white water run in Colorado. Coupled with great mountainous scenery, this will be a great experience. We will camp along the Arkansas River that night and then depart for some sightseeing on our way to Denver where we will visit the Denver Zoo, which is one of the best in the U.S. We will depart for Salina the next morning. (5 stars) (Trip itineraries available upon request.)



When: Thursday, May 17 – Sunday, May 20

Time: 6:30 am departure from Lakewood Discovery Center

Limit: 16 participants (18 yr+ unless accompanied by an adult)

Fee: \$150.00 per person (includes transportation, all camping fees, rafting fees, entrance fees, and most meals)

American History & Fall Foliage Tour

A classic autumn adventure tour is just around the corner for you and your friends. Our tour is packed with historical features and the beautiful fall landscapes of the New England countryside.

We will travel to Washington D.C. to tour the Capitol Building, White House, Arlington Cemetery, the Smithsonian, and many other awe-inspiring national treasures. A bus tour will charter us around the city at our leisure as we enjoy our American heritage.

Then we will head for our next destination aboard the Vermonter train, bound for beautiful upper Vermont. Our trek will take us through many other scenic states including Maryland, Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, allowing us to view some of the greatest fall landscapes in America from the comfort of our cabin seats. In addition to the natural splendor of the countryside, we will travel through many of our nation's largest cities, including Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

Later that evening we will arrive in Burlington, Vermont and check in to our hotel to relax. We will explore this classic Vermont town on the shores of beautiful Lake Champlain, home of the fabled lake monster, Champ. Burlington also the home of Ethan Allen, which the University of Vermont features in a museum on campus. We will tour the shoreline of the lake on a guided boat tour, learn about the history of the region, and view the fall foliage that makes this area so famous. We will also browse through the Church Market Square in old Downtown for authentic Vermont products. The next day we will return to Washington D.C. for our return to Salina. (4 stars)

Please contact the LDC if interested, as the open enrollment of this trip will not be available through the Parks & Recreation office until a later date. All information subject to change for final confirmation.

When: September 19 – 25

Time: TBD

Limit: 20 participants (under 18 must be accompanied by an adult)

Fee: TBD (includes airfare, ground transportation, rail service, hotels, boat tour, all entry fees and tour fees, and select meals)



Special Sneak Preview!

This Fall trip is offered first to our newsletter subscribers & will not be advertised to the general public until the Spring Newsletter & Activity Guide!





LAKWOOD DISCOVERY CENTER

Wild Birthday Parties



Looking for a new and unique way to celebrate your child's birthday? Lakewood Discovery Center has just that! We offer a variety of programs that are not only educational, but also entertaining and fascinating for everyone. Come and celebrate your special day with us!

Who: Young persons age 4 and up (some age restrictions apply for certain programs)

When: Parties available Monday – Thursday with starting times between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Reservations made by contracting Lakewood Discovery Center at 826-7335.
Please reserve at least two weeks in advance.

What: The program will be 1 ½ hrs.

Approximately 1 hr is reserved for the activity and ~ ½ hr for gifts and treats, although this schedule can be flexible.

Persons reserving the program shall provide the treats and gifts.

Fee: A fee of \$25 or \$30 will be required for the program, depending on program chosen.

A \$2 fee will be applied for each child above the number of 15, up to a maximum of 20 children

Activities

\$25 Package

Creature Feature: Meet the animal ambassadors of Lakewood! We will be getting up close and personal with some of our animal friends, such as turtles, frogs, toads, salamanders, lizards, and snakes, to learn the amazing ways they eat, hide, and protect themselves in the wild.

Nature Walk: Explore the trails at Lakewood with us! Our Urban Wildlife Sanctuary offers lots to see and discover! We will learn about the trees, plants, and animals that make Lakewood their home. Who knows what we will see?!

Lakewood Games: We all love to play games. How about games that help us learn about nature? Even better! Together we will play a variety of nature-oriented games that are fun *and* educational. (*Ages 7 and up.*)

\$30 Package

Weird Science: Whoa! Cool! This is what you will hear as we wow and amaze partygoers with volcanoes, rockets, and much more. Come learn with us as we perform science experiments with ordinary household items. (*Ages 9 and up.*)

Canoeing: Come and cruise the waters of Lakewood! We will start with basic canoeing skills, then hit the water ready for fun! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Archery: Learn the basics of archery, then try your best Robin Hood imitation here at the archery range in our forest! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Bubble Magic: Pop! Kids love bubbles! We will explore how bubbles work and then see how many different ways we can make them and play with them. (*Offered May 1 – August 31.*)



Naturalist Notes by Bill Gaskill



"I bet you're pretty bored during the winter, aren't you?" "Get your nap in today?" "Another long day at the WOOD?" These are some of the typical questions I get during the deep of winter. Most think that interest and visitation drops off during these long cold months. Almost always this turns out to be *untrue*. This is the time of year that we perform countless Kansas Day presentations, evaluate the recently ended year, prepare for the upcoming year, and continue the daily operations of Lakewood.

This past year was a successful one. Our programs continue to be popular with the public and we believe them to be positive. There have been six new additions to Lakewood Park and Indian Rock Park: a new stair case, trail extension, new benches, hummingbird garden, new trail signage, and a new fish feeder. Our newsletter seems to be well received. A few displays have been added or started that are generating curiosity. They are the Flora & Fauna of Lakewood, Nose Display, and Poisonous Plants and Animals. Our outdoor adventure trips to Arkansas and Yosemite/Tahoe were also successful. This added up to another quality season of environmental programming provided by the Natural Resources Staff.

Planning and preparation for the next year becomes an important aspect of the daily routine this time of year. We have planned some exciting projects for the center this year: new flooring in the kitchen area, a renovation of the Backyard Winter Bird scene, internet access to weather station, and continued work on the new mammal display room. While we will continue our routine outdoor projects there will be a revamping of the Wildlife Viewing Area. Wildlife plantings, new wildlife blind, new feeders, and a water supply will all be added. The trips that we are planning this year include a white water rafting in Colorado, crystal digging & sand dune riding in Oklahoma, and a fall foliage trip to the Washington D.C. area. With all this, Lakewood staff continues to find it hard to find time for a nice winter nap. Job Security Right??



LDC'S AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2006

Here are the results of Lakewood Discovery Center's Audubon Christmas Bird Count: which was held on December 28, 2006 and included 1 staff and the help of 5 participants. We saw a total of 222 individual birds over 1 hr & 15 min period.

| <u>Bird Species:</u> | <u># seen:</u> | <u>Bird Species:</u> | <u># seen:</u> |
|------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| American Goldfinch | 12 | Mourning Dove | 8 |
| Black-capped Chickadee | 43 | Northern Cardinal | 18 |
| Carolina Wren | 2 | Northern Flicker | 1 |
| Common Crow | 1 | Red-bellied Woodpecker | 3 |
| Downy Woodpecker | 13 | Sparrow ssp. | 1 |
| Hairy Woodpecker | 2 | White-breasted Nuthatch | 13 |
| House Finch | 14 | Wren ssp. | 2 |
| Dark-eyed Junco | 89 | | |

Stump the Naturalist

If you have a question about Kansas wildlife and/or environment, we invite you to write us and let our Naturalists sort it out. In our next issue, we will print your question along with our answer.



Lakewood Fun Page

Lakewood Trivia!

Adult Trivia Questions:

1. When did Kansas become a state?
2. What was our first adopted state symbol?
3. What is the State Soil?



KIDS! Draw your favorite Kansas Symbol



(Send in your picture, or a copy. Be sure to include your name and age. The LDC judges will pick their favorite from those submitted and publish it in the next issue.)

Kids' Trivia Questions:

1. What is the state reptile?
2. What is the state amphibian?
3. What is the state insect

Trivia Answers:

Adults: 1) January 29, 1861, 2) sunflower, 1903, and 3) Harney silt loam

Kids: 1) ornate box turtles, 2) barred tiger salamander, and 3) honey bee



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